



DIVISION OF PUBLIC PROGRAMS

MEDIA PROJECTS: PRODUCTION GRANTS

Deadline: August 9, 2017 (for projects beginning April 2018)

The Division of Public Programs accepts applications for the two Media Projects programs (Development and Production) at two deadlines a year: in January and August.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 45.164

If after reading this document you have questions about this grant program, contact the staff of NEH's Division of Public Programs at 202-606-8269 or publicpgms@neh.gov. Applicants who are deaf or hard of hearing can contact NEH via Federal Relay (TTY users) at 800-877-8399.

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I. Program Description

The Media Projects program supports film, television, and radio projects that engage general audiences with humanities ideas in creative and appealing ways. All projects must be grounded in humanities scholarship in disciplines such as history, art history, film studies, literature, drama, religious studies, philosophy, or anthropology. (You can find a more detailed description of the humanities [here](#).) Projects must also demonstrate an approach that is thoughtful, balanced, and analytical (rather than celebratory). The approach to the subject matter must go beyond the mere presentation of factual information to explore its larger significance and stimulate critical thinking. NEH is a national funding agency, so the projects that we support must demonstrate the potential to attract a broad general audience.

Film and television projects may be single programs or a series addressing significant figures, events, or ideas. Programs must be intended for national distribution, via traditional carriage or online distribution. The Division of Public Programs welcomes projects that range in length from short-form to broadcast-length video.

The Division of Public Programs also encourages film and television projects that examine international themes and subjects in the humanities, in order to spark Americans' engagement with the broader world beyond the United States. These projects should demonstrate international collaboration by enlisting scholars based both in the United States and abroad, and/or by working with an international media team. The collaborations should bring broad cross-cultural perspectives to the proposed topics and should be intended primarily for U.S. public audiences.

Radio projects, including podcasts, may involve single programs, limited series, or segments within an ongoing series. They may also develop new humanities content to augment existing radio programming or add greater historical background or humanities analysis to the subjects of existing programs. Programs receiving production grants may be either broadcast or disseminated online. They may be intended for national or regional distribution.

NEH encourages projects that engage public audiences through multiple formats in the exploration of humanities ideas. Proposed projects might include complementary components to a film, television, or radio project. These components should deepen the audience's understanding of the subject in a supplementary manner: for example, book/film discussion programs, supplemental educational websites, or museum exhibitions.

To be competitive, applicants must have clear central ideas and a solid command of the major humanities scholarship on their subject, and they must have consulted with a team of scholarly advisers to work out the intellectual issues that the program will explore. The scholars must represent major fields relevant to the subject matter, have a strong record of research and scholarship in the humanities, and offer diverse perspectives and approaches. As needed, the project team may also include participants with expertise appropriate to the project's formats or technical requirements.

If you seek to develop or produce a digital project that is independent of a film, television, or radio project, you should apply to the [Digital Projects for the Public](#) grant program. Please contact a [Division of Public Programs program officer](#) if you have questions about which grant program best fits your project.

All projects applying to the Media Projects program should

- build on sound humanities scholarship;
- deepen public understanding of significant humanities questions;
- approach a subject analytically, presenting a variety of perspectives;
- involve humanities scholars in all phases of development and production;
- involve appropriate media professionals; and
- employ appealing and accessible program formats that will actively engage the general public in learning.

Grant categories

Development grants enable media producers to collaborate with scholars to develop humanities content and to prepare programs for production. Grants should result in a script and may also yield a detailed plan for outreach and public engagement in collaboration with a partner organization or organizations. See application guidelines for [Development Grants](#).

Production grants support the production and distribution of films, television programs, and radio programs or podcasts that promise to engage a broad public audience.

Chairman's Special Awards (up to \$1 million) are offered for projects of exceptional significance, audience reach, and complexity. A Chairman's Special Award project should examine important humanities ideas in new ways and promise to reach extremely large audiences. These goals can often be accomplished through combining a variety of program formats, forming creative collaborations among diverse institutions, and significantly expanding the scope and reach of the project. Note that Chairman's Special Awards are offered only at the production stage—not at the development stage. Chairman's Special Awards are rare: NEH typically awards no more than **one** Chairman's Special Award per year.

To be ready to apply for a production grant, you should have

1. completed research on your subject, including archival work and preliminary interviews;
2. involved scholars in creating and interpreting the project's content;
3. completed the project's script(s) (for film or television projects) or detailed treatment(s) (for radio projects); and

4. designed your plans for distribution, outreach, and partnerships.

Media Projects: Production Grants may be used for

- meeting with scholars;
- research and script refinement;
- production and distribution of films, television programs, and radio programs; and
- outreach activities and public engagement.

Media Projects: Production Grants may not be used for

- primarily digital projects that are independent of a film, television, or radio program;
- dramatic adaptations of literary works;
- projects that will satisfy requirements for educational degrees or formal professional training;
- projects intended primarily for students in formal learning environments (though projects may include components that can be used in classrooms);
- general operations, renovation, restoration, rehabilitation, or construction of station or production facilities;
- preservation or cataloging of materials and collections;
- programs designed to persuade audiences of a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view; or
- projects that advocate a particular program of social or political action.

NEH funds may not be used to support obscene, libelous, indecent, or defamatory content (including hate speech, personal attacks, or material constituting harassment).

Consultation with NEH staff

The Division of Public Programs encourages applicants to work with [program officers](#) from the outset of the application process. You can submit drafts or contact us with questions. Drafts, which are optional, must be submitted at least six weeks before the deadline, so that staff will have adequate time to respond. A response cannot be guaranteed if drafts arrive after this date.

While staff comments are not part of the formal review process and have no bearing on the final outcome of the proposal, previous applicants have found them helpful in strengthening their applications. If you choose to submit a draft proposal, send it as an attachment to publicpgms@neh.gov.

Applicants are also encouraged to examine the sample narratives from previously funded projects, which are available on the [program resource page](#).

NEH welcomes applications in the following areas:

The Common Good: The Humanities in the Public Square

NEH invites projects related to its initiative, [The Common Good: The Humanities in the Public Square](#). This initiative seeks to connect the study of the humanities to the current conditions of national life. Many of today's challenges require more than ever the forms of understanding and knowledge represented by the humanities. They require the broadest possible engagement of scholars and the public with the resources of the humanities, including but not limited to the study of language, literature, history, philosophy, comparative religion, and ethics. The study of the humanities can help illuminate the complexity of many contemporary challenges while enriching our understanding of the common good.

Note that the Common Good initiative incorporates the [Standing Together](#) initiative, which encourages projects related to war and military service.

Humanities and science and technology

The humanities offer significant insight into scientific discovery, scientific thinking, and the historical, cultural, and ethical implications of various technologies. The Division of Public Programs encourages projects that examine connections between the humanities and science and technology. Projects might, for example, provide the historical and social contexts for scientific developments. They might illuminate how science is produced and scientific information is consumed, analyze how technological innovation helps reshape our understanding of our place in the world, or discuss the ethical and political implications of scientific and technological developments. Proposals must demonstrate sound humanities and science scholarship. Projects must involve collaboration between the project team and advisers drawn from both the humanities and the sciences.

In addition, NEH especially encourages projects that include Native American organizations and communities as lead applicants and project partners.

All applications will be given equal consideration in accordance with the program's evaluation criteria, whether or not they respond to any of these initiatives.

Providing access to grant products

As a taxpayer-supported federal agency, NEH endeavors to make the products of its awards available to the broadest possible audience. Our goal is for scholars, educators, students, and the American public to have ready and easy access to the wide range of NEH award products. All other considerations being equal, NEH gives preference to those projects that provide free access to the public. For the Media Projects program, such products may include film, radio and television programs, and complementary digital media components. Detailed guidance on access and dissemination matters can be found in the “Distribution expectations and rights” section below.

NEH grantees must follow the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which is designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of handicap in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. For more information consult Design for Accessibility: A Cultural Administrator's Handbook [here](#).

Evaluation

Once production is completed, NEH requires a final report that assesses how well the project met its goals to educate and engage the public. Information on the project’s reach (size of audience) and impact must be part of this final report. NEH particularly wants to know how fully the project met its stated learning goals and how audiences were more deeply engaged in thinking about humanities ideas and questions as a result of the project.

Acknowledgment of NEH support

NEH requires crediting for any program based on or incorporating the materials created with these awards, including any works derived from those materials.

Distribution expectations and rights

Once production is completed, NEH expects that projects will be offered for distribution to broad public audiences, so that the American public will have ready and easy access to the products of NEH awards. NEH must approve all distribution arrangements before they are finalized.

NEH requires grantees producing a film or television program to submit a trailer along with the finished film or program; the trailer or the complete film may be streamed for a limited time on the NEH website.

While the grantee owns the rights to the products of the grant, such as program scripts and radio and television programs, NEH reserves a nonexclusive and irrevocable right to use materials produced under a grant and to authorize others to use these materials for federal purposes. Grant recipients are expected to provide upon request copies of NEH-funded films to the Department of State at the cost of reproduction and shipping; no royalties or other fees may be charged. These films will be shown by American embassies to audiences free of charge through the Department of State’s “American Spaces” program, which seeks to engage audiences abroad in order to build mutual trust and respect.

For more information on NEH's rights to grant products, please see [Article 23 of the General Terms and Conditions for Awards](#).

Program income

Award recipients are required to report income earned from grant products during the grant period and for seven years following the end of the grant. In addition, a percentage of income earned during this period must be returned to NEH. The percentage is based upon the proportion of NEH support of the total project costs. For further information, please see the [NEH Program Income Policy](#).

Award information

Awards last for one to three years and may range from \$100,000 to \$650,000. In rare circumstances, **Chairman's Special Awards** of up to \$1 million are available for projects that will reach an exceptionally large audience.

Successful applicants will be awarded a grant in outright funds, matching funds, or a combination of the two, depending on the applicant's preference and the availability of funds.

Outright funds

Outright funds awarded by NEH are not contingent on additional funding from other sources.

Matching funds

When matching funds are requested, the applicant must raise contributions from nonfederal third parties and have them certified before the grant funds are released to the grantee (see NEH's [Federal Matching Funds Guidelines](#)). Funds raised to satisfy a match count toward an institution's cost share for a project (see the discussion of cost sharing below).

(Learn more about [different types of grant funding](#).)

Cost sharing

Cost sharing includes cash contributions to a project by the applicant and third parties, as well as in-kind contributions, such as donated goods and services. Cost sharing also includes gift money raised to release federal matching funds. Although a specific dollar amount or percentage of cost sharing is not required, the program is rarely able to support the full costs of projects approved for funding.

Funding commitments

Successful applicants will be required to have commitments for the full funding of the project budget before grant funds are released and production begins.

Other award information

A grant from NEH for one stage of a project does not commit NEH to continued support for the project. Applications for each stage of a project are evaluated independently.

Eligibility

Any U.S. nonprofit organization with IRS 501(c)(3) status is eligible, as are state and local governmental agencies and federally recognized Indian tribal governments. Individuals are not eligible to apply. Independent producers who wish to apply for NEH funding must seek an eligible organization to sponsor the project and submit the application to NEH. Under this arrangement the sponsoring organization is considered the grantee of record and assumes all attendant responsibilities of a grantee organization.

NEH generally does not award grants to other federal entities or to applicants whose projects are so closely intertwined with a federal entity that the project takes on characteristics of the federal entity's own authorized activities. This does not preclude applicants from using grant funds from, or sites and materials controlled by, other federal entities in their projects.

Applicants are not required to obtain a development grant before applying for a production grant. Applicants may not, however, submit multiple applications for the same project at the same deadline. If an application for a project is already under review, another application for the same project cannot be accepted by this or any other NEH grant opportunity.

Late, incomplete, or ineligible applications will not be reviewed.

II. Preparing and Organizing your Application

Resources for preparing a strong application

To prepare a strong application, applicants are encouraged to take the following steps:

- read these **guidelines** carefully, noting what information needs to be provided in the application;
- review the **sample narratives**, which are available on the [program resource page](#);
- consult the program's **evaluation criteria**, which are listed immediately below;
- read the **Frequently Asked Questions**, which are available on the [program resource page](#);
- contact the **program staff** (at 202-606-8269 or publicpgms@neh.gov) to discuss your project and raise any questions you may have about the application; and
- submit an optional **draft proposal**, to which program staff will respond with suggestions and advice.

Applicants whose projects have received NEH support may apply for a grant for a new or subsequent stage of that project. These proposals receive no special consideration and will be

judged by the same criteria as others in the grant competition. In addition, such applicants must substantially update their proposals and must include a description of the new activities and a justification of the new budget. Such applicants must also describe how the previously funded project met its goals.

Evaluation criteria

Applicants should read the program's evaluation criteria (listed below) and ensure that their applications respond to them.

1. **Humanities content**

The likely contribution of the project to public understanding of the humanities, including the significance of the subject and the humanities ideas; the quality and relevance of the humanities scholarship informing the project; and the extent to which the project offers an analytical perspective on the themes and ideas that underlie it.

2. **Creative approach**

The quality of the storytelling and audiovisual approach of the program as described in the script or treatment; and the likelihood that the chosen creative approach(es) will effectively convey the humanities content to the audience in an engaging and thoughtful manner.

3. **Audience and distribution plan**

The appeal of the subject to a general audience, the accessibility of the ideas, and the quality of the project's distribution plan. The likely effectiveness of the proposed audience evaluation for measuring the project's reach and impact.

4. **Project resources**

The appropriateness of the materials and resources that support the project's interpretive themes and ideas. The quality of the materials and resources available for the project, as evidenced in the application (including, but not limited to, the list of collections of materials to be used by the project and rights and permissions sections of the narrative, and the bibliography).

5. **Humanities advisers**

The qualifications and potential contributions of the advising scholars.

6. Media team

The experience and demonstrated technical skills of the media team, and the quality of the team's previous work (including the work sample), the extent to which the roles of the members of the team are clearly defined, and the likelihood of successful completion of the proposed project; evidence that institutional partners will collaborate effectively.

7. Script or treatment

The thoroughness of the script (for film or television programs) or treatment (for radio programs), the appeal of the content, and the significance of the take-away ideas.

8. Work sample

The quality of the work sample, and the qualifications of the media team to produce the proposed project successfully.

9. Work plan and budget

The likelihood that the applicant will achieve the project's goals in a timely and efficient manner; the appropriateness and reasonability of the project's costs.

10. Overall evaluation

The quality of the project, taken as a whole.

All other considerations being equal, the program will give preference to projects that provide free access to materials produced with grant funds.

As noted earlier, before they submit a proposal applicants are encouraged to contact [program officers](#), who can answer questions about the review process and review preliminary drafts. (See the "Consultation with NEH staff" section above for additional information.)

The Division of Public Programs funds content first and format second. In other words, your application must convey a solid grasp of its subject and the related scholarship. Tell us why your subject matters and demonstrate that the proposed formats are a good match for it. Don't leave it to the reader to make connections that should be explicit.

Application elements

The following required elements must be submitted through Grants.gov.

1. Table of contents

List all parts of the application with corresponding page numbers.

2. Abstract

Provide a one-paragraph abstract (up to one thousand characters, including spaces) written for a nonspecialist audience, clearly explaining the project's principal activities and its expected results. You should also copy the paragraph into the Project Information field in the Application for Federal Domestic Assistance - Short Organizational form. (Information about this form is available in the Grants.gov Instructions for Institutional Applicants document. You can find a link to that document on the [program resource page](#).)

3. Narrative (up to twenty pages)

The narrative portion of the proposal should not exceed **twenty** single-spaced pages, with one-inch margins and at least eleven-point type.

The narrative should contain the following, in this order.

A. Nature of the request:

State in one or two paragraphs the subject and format of the project, the amount of money requested from NEH, the anticipated total budget for the production of the project, and that you are applying for a production grant. In addition, briefly describe any multiformat components to be developed.

If support is requested for one program in a radio or television series, indicate the number and length of programs planned for the series. Also indicate where the proposed program fits into the overall series and the total projected cost to produce the series.

If you are requesting a Chairman's Special Award, describe the aspects of your project that merit this higher funding level.

B. Program synopsis:

Provide a brief synopsis of the story that describes how the program will unfold from beginning to end.

C. Humanities content:

Identify the humanities ideas, themes, and questions that the project will address. Explain the subject's significance to the humanities and discuss the humanities scholarship that informs the project. (In the Frequently Asked Questions document, which is available on the [program resource page](#), see the question about humanities themes. For examples, see the sample narratives, which are also available on that page.)

D. Creative approach:

Describe the program's audio-visual style and approach. For example, from what perspective will the program tell its story? Will it use narration, on-camera interviews, dramatic re-creations, dramatizations, animation, or other techniques?

In explaining the program's approach, briefly describe the most important resources available for the project, including interviews, archival materials, and other audio and visual materials. (You will be able to provide a detailed list of materials in section N of the narrative—"List of collections of materials to be used by the project"—below.) If applicable, also describe dramatizations and/or animation techniques that the project would incorporate.

If your request includes funding for a digital component that would complement the project, describe the component's user experience, technical framework, and educational elements. Explain how the digital component will expand the audience's understanding of and engagement with the project's humanities content.

If there are other productions on similar or related subjects, explain how the project will make a new contribution.

Applicants may provide visuals, including screenshots for digital components, in the "Images" attachment below.

E. Audience and distribution:

Describe the expected audience and present a distribution plan for reaching this audience. The plan should detail how the grant product might be broadcast and/or streamed on the Internet. Discuss partnerships that would help publicize the project. If you have received a letter of interest or commitment from a broadcaster or distributor about your project, include the letter in item 8 of the application—"Résumés and letters of interest and commitment"—below.

F. Project evaluation:

NEH requires a final report that assesses how well the finished project met its goals to educate and engage the public. Information on the project's reach (size of audience) and impact must be included in this final report. NEH particularly wants to know how fully the project met its stated learning goals and how audiences were more deeply engaged in thinking about humanities ideas and questions as a result of the project.

Explain fully how you will evaluate the reach and impact of your project upon completion. Your evaluation plan should be integrated into your project narrative, work plan, and budget.

G. Rights and permissions:

Indicate who controls the rights to the materials to be used. Discuss the potential for obtaining permissions to use materials and the likely costs of obtaining permissions and clearing the rights.

H. Humanities advisers:

List the humanities advisers and briefly discuss the rationale for their choice and the specific contributions that each adviser will make to the project's content. The application's work plan and budget should specify the advisers' contributions to the project. Include résumés (of two pages or less) for each person listed and letters of commitment from all in a separate attachment (see the instructions for item 8 of the application—"Résumés and letters of interest and commitment"—below).

I. Media team:

Provide information about the principal members of the media team. (Principal members include at a minimum the director, writer, editor, and, if applicable, the lead digital designer.) In a paragraph, summarize each person's qualifications and contributions to the project. Discuss the media team's experience and suitability for the proposed project. Include résumés (of two pages or less) for each person listed and letters of commitment from all in a separate attachment (see the instructions for item 8 of the application—"Résumés and letters of interest and commitment"—below).

J. Progress:

Discuss the work that has been accomplished to date on the project. Indicate the remaining work that will be done during the NEH grant period. If the request is for a program in a broadcast series, indicate how much of the work on the entire series has been completed and what remains to be done.

K. Work plan:

Provide a detailed, month-by-month schedule of the major work to be done during the grant period, the amount of time it will require, and the specific people involved. Be especially clear about when the meetings of the media team with the scholars and other consultants will occur and how these activities will advance the project. The work plan should clearly show how the humanities advisers will be involved in reviewing and shaping the project.

L. Fundraising plan:

Specify the source and amount of all funds raised to date for all aspects of the program and related projects. Include information about any previous NEH grants, as well as support for this project received from state humanities councils, foundations, individuals, and other sources. Estimate the project's total cost, and discuss specific plans for raising funds from outside sources to cover the costs that will exceed NEH support. Discuss plans for the sale of rights for distribution.

M. Organization profile:

Describe briefly the applicant institution and, if different, the production organization. Provide information about each organization's aims, origin, special characteristics, current activities, and experience with humanities programs. Each profile should be only one paragraph.

N. List of collections of materials to be used by the project:

Describe the available resources that will enable the project to tell its story.

O. Preliminary interviews:

If you have conducted preliminary interviews, include a list of those who have been interviewed.

P. User-generated content (if applicable):

If the project includes user-generated content, describe how it will add to the humanities content and explain the criteria and process to be used for selecting and monitoring the content that will be made available to the public. Describe the policies and process to be used to prevent the dissemination of obscene, libelous, indecent, or defamatory content (including hate speech, personal attacks, or material constituting harassment).

4. Script (for film and television projects) or detailed treatment (for radio projects)

Include a script (for film and television programs) or a detailed treatment (for radio programs) that describes how the program will unfold, from start to finish. The script or treatment should demonstrate how the storyline or narrative of the program combines the principal materials available for the program and integrates the analysis and interpretive content. The script or treatment should not exceed **thirty** pages per hour of the proposed program.

If you are applying to produce all or part of a television series, include at least one complete script and shorter (up to five-page) treatments describing each of the remaining episodes. Similarly, if you are applying to produce a radio series, include two detailed treatments and shorter descriptions of the other programs.

You may use published humanities scholarship, archival resources, and preliminary interviews that you have conducted as the foundation for your script or detailed treatment. Please clearly identify the sources that inform the script or treatment.

If you are proposing a project that examines contemporary culture and issues, explain the basis for your script. For example, you may identify the footage that you have already shot, the preliminary interviews that you have already conducted, and the scholarly research that would serve as the foundation for your program.

5. Digital design (if applicable)

If you are requesting support for an ancillary digital component (such as a website or an app), please describe the user experience. Describe and visually illustrate how users would experience the component, using mockups, wireframes, screenshots, or storyboards; include specific examples of how the project's central humanities ideas would be conveyed by this design.

If the ancillary digital component includes user-generated content, unless you have already addressed this issue in section P of the narrative you should describe how it will add to the humanities content and explain the criteria and process to be used for selecting and monitoring the content that will be made available to the public. Describe the policies and process to be used to prevent the dissemination of obscene, libelous, indecent, or defamatory content (including hate speech, personal attacks, or material constituting harassment).

6. Images (optional)

You may include images with your application as a single PDF attachment. Be sure to include in this attachment a list of the images.

7. **Bibliography (up to two pages)**

Include a short bibliography of the humanities scholarship that significantly informs the project.

8. **Résumés and letters of interest and commitment**

List on one page the media team and humanities advisers, using the following format: Joan Smith (American studies, University of Maryland), or John Smith (producer, ABC Films). Include résumés (of two pages or less) for and letters of commitment from the key persons on the media team and all consultants (including humanities advisers or scholars). Also include letters of commitment from all participating organizations. In addition, if you have received a letter of interest or commitment from a broadcaster or distributor regarding your project, include the letter as part of this item.

9. **Description of a sample**

All applicants must submit one sample of a completed work by the project team that best demonstrates the experience and qualifications of the media team to produce the proposed project successfully. If an applicant does not submit a completed work sample (a previous film, television documentary, or radio program), the application may be deemed ineligible.

Submit the sample on a **single** DVD (standard definition) or through an embedded URL. If a sample is on DVD, submit eight copies. Samples may include a completed program and a work in progress, but all must be contained on a single DVD. Samples will not be retained by NEH, and they will not be returned to the applicant. See the additional instructions in the “Submitting samples” section below.

If you have a trailer or work-in-progress for the proposed media project, you may submit the URL or DVD for the sample, **in addition** to the completed work.

If a pilot program from a proposed series exists, it must be submitted as the sample.

If funding is requested for additional support of a series that has received previous production support from NEH, a complete program must be submitted as the sample.

The Media Projects program encourages applicants to submit samples by linking to a URL. You are responsible for ensuring that the link to the sample remains active and that the sample is accessible throughout the review period.

If the project includes secondary digital media components, include an example of previously completed work from the principal members of the digital team. We would like to have this work available through a URL included in the application but would also accept a DVD, if that is a more appropriate format. Clearly indicate that this URL is your digital work sample. Identify the project personnel who worked on this sample and, if

relevant, include additional information on the audience or distribution of the work sample. If you are submitting a DVD, see the additional information in the “Submitting samples” section below.

Create an attachment section describing the sample and indicate the roles played by members of the media team.

10. **Budget**

Using the instructions and the sample budget, complete the budget form (MS Excel format) or a format of your own that includes all the required information. (You can find links to the budget instructions, sample budget, and budget form on the [program resource page](#).) Submit your budget in a font of at least eleven points. If you wish, you may include separate pages with notes to explain any of the budget items in more detail.

If the applicant institution is claiming indirect costs and has a federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement, submit a copy of the agreement. Do not attach it to your budget form. Instead you must attach it to the Budget Narrative Attachment Form (also known as the Budget Narrative File). (See the instructions for this form in the Application Checklist near the end of this document.) Alternatively, you must attach a statement to the form, explaining a) that the applicant institution is not claiming indirect costs; b) that the applicant institution does not currently have a federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement; c) that the applicant institution is a sponsorship (umbrella) organization, which will charge an administrative fee of 5 percent of the total direct costs; or d) that the applicant institution is using the government-wide rate of up to 10 percent of the total direct costs, less distorting items (including but not limited to capital expenditures, participant stipends, fellowships, and the portion of each subgrant or subcontract in excess of \$25,000).

Indirect costs are computed by applying a negotiated indirect-cost rate to a distribution base (typically a portion of the direct costs of the project). If the applicant institution is claiming indirect costs and has a current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement, include on the budget form the following information: a) the indirect-cost rate; b) the federal agency with which the agreement was negotiated; and c) the date of the agreement.

If the applicant institution does not have a current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate or has not submitted a pending indirect-cost proposal to a federal agency, you may choose one of the following options, if you wish to include overhead charges in the budget:

- NEH will not require the formal negotiation of an indirect-cost rate, provided that the charge for indirect costs does not exceed 10 percent of direct costs, less distorting items (including but not limited to capital expenditures, participant stipends, fellowships, and the portion of each individual subgrant or subcontract in excess of \$25,000). This option is not available to sponsorship (umbrella) organizations. If you choose this option, you must maintain documentation to support overhead charges claimed as part of project costs.

- If the applicant organization wishes to use a rate higher than 10 percent, you must provide an estimate of the indirect-cost rate and the charges on the budget form. If the application is approved for funding, NEH will provide instructions in the award document on how to negotiate an indirect-cost rate with NEH.

If you choose one of these two options, please indicate on your budget form that you are doing so.

- **Compensation**

Identify all key project personnel by name on the budget form, and note the number of days that each of them will contribute to the project. Indicate in the budget if any of these individuals will perform different and separately budgeted functions.

Compensation for key project positions, such as the project director, producer, director, and scriptwriter, will be considered as fixed fees for service, even though the amount of compensation requested is calculated on the basis of the projected length of the project.

- **Department of Labor regulations**

U.S. Department of Labor regulations require that all professional performers, scriptwriters, and related or supporting professional personnel employed on projects or productions supported in whole or in part by NEH be paid not less than the minimum union or guild rates.

A copy of the applicable regulations, “Labor Standards on Projects or Productions Assisted by Grants from the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities,” may be accessed [online](#) or obtained from NEH’s Office of Grant Management, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20506 (202-606-8494).

- **Equipment**

Normally, NEH does not allow the purchase of equipment, but applicants may use their own equipment and include charges for this use, subject to the following:

- for equipment and facilities that are not fully depreciated, determine actual costs on the basis of the acquisition costs, divided by the useful life, times the period of use on the project; and
- for equipment and facilities that have been fully depreciated, charges to operate the asset, including the cost of maintenance, insurance, and other related expenses, are allowable.

- **Administrative fee in lieu of indirect costs for sponsoring organizations**

Under certain circumstances, a nonprofit organization may sponsor an independent producer, filmmaker, or group that, without tax-exempt status, is not eligible to apply directly for a grant from NEH. The sponsoring organization, also called an “umbrella” organization, may provide the project with accounting services, office and editing facilities, fundraising assistance, and other administrative support, but may not carry out the project activities itself. Under this arrangement the sponsoring organization is considered the grantee of record and assumes all attendant responsibilities of a grantee. For further information, please see [Requirements for Grant Recipients that Serve as Sponsors of Projects](#).

NEH will allow a sponsoring organization to recover its costs for administering the award by charging an administrative fee of 5 percent of total project costs. This administrative fee may be charged instead of negotiating an indirect-cost rate with NEH.

Applicants that are sponsoring organizations and wish to budget for the 5 percent administrative fee should do so in the “indirect costs” section of the NEH budget form.

III. Submitting your Application

To be able to submit an application, applicants must have registered with Grants.gov and must have an updated Entity record in the System for Award Management (SAM). More detailed information is immediately below.

All applications to this program must be submitted via Grants.gov. NEH strongly recommends that you complete or verify your Grants.gov registration at least two weeks before the application deadline, since it takes time to process your registration.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) requires federal agencies to make information about the expenditure of tax funds available to the public. To facilitate this, the applicant organization must maintain current information in its Entity record in the System for Award Management (SAM). You must therefore review and update the information in your organization’s Entity record at least annually after the initial registration, and more frequently if required by changes in your organization’s information or another award term. In order for your organization to apply for an award via Grants.gov, receive an award, or receive payment on an award, the information in its Entity record must be current. You can update your organization’s Entity record [here](#). You may need a new SAM User Account to register your organization or update its Entity record. **NEH strongly recommends that applicants update (or, if necessary, create) their SAM Entity record at least four weeks before the application deadline.**

Links to the Grants.gov application package and instructions for preparing and submitting the package can be found on the [program resource page](#).

Be sure to read the [document](#) (PDF) that explains how to confirm that you successfully submitted your application. It is your responsibility as an applicant to confirm that Grants.gov and subsequently NEH have accepted your application.

Submitting samples

The Media Projects program encourages applicants to submit samples by linking to a URL. You are responsible for ensuring that the link to the sample remains active and that the sample is accessible throughout the review period (that is, through April 2018). Double-check all links to confirm that they work, and supply all necessary passwords.

If your sample is not available as a URL, please send **eight copies**. Each copy of the sample (both the case and the disk) must be labeled with the name of the project director, the name of the applicant institution, the title of the project, and the title of the work sample. Send the sample to:

Grants for Media Projects
Division of Public Programs
National Endowment for the Humanities
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20506
202-606-8269

NEH continues to experience lengthy delays in the delivery of mail by the U.S. Postal Service, and in some cases materials are damaged by the irradiation process. We recommend that samples be sent by a commercial delivery service to ensure that they arrive intact by the receipt deadline.

Deadlines for submitting optional draft proposals and applications

Draft proposals, which are optional, must be submitted at least six weeks before the deadline so that staff will have adequate time to respond. A response cannot be guaranteed if drafts arrive after this date. If you choose to submit a draft proposal, send it as an attachment to publicpgms@neh.gov.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov on or before August 9, 2017, for projects beginning in April 2018. Grants.gov will date- and time-stamp your application after it is fully uploaded. Applications submitted after August 9, 2017, will not be accepted. Samples must also arrive at NEH on or before August 9, 2017, to be considered as part of the application.

IV. What Happens After the Submission of an Application

Review and selection process

Knowledgeable persons outside NEH will read each application and advise the agency about its merits. NEH staff comments on matters of fact or on significant issues that otherwise would be missing from these reviews, then makes recommendations to the National Council on the Humanities. The National Council meets at various times during the year to advise the NEH chairman on grants. The chairman takes into account the advice provided by the review process and, by law, makes all funding decisions. More details about NEH's review process are available [here](#).

Prior to making an award, NEH will conduct a risk assessment of successful applicants, consistent with Uniform Guidance [§200.205](#). (See two paragraphs below the next heading for more information about the Uniform Guidance provided by the Office of Management and Budget.) This assessment guards against the risk that federal financial assistance might be wasted, used fraudulently, or abused. Based on its risk assessment, NEH will include in the award documents specific conditions designed to mitigate the effects of the risk.

Information for all applicants and for successful applicants

Applicants will be notified of the decision by e-mail in April 2018. Institutional grants administrators and project directors of successful applications will receive award documents by e-mail in April 2018. Award documents will identify the relevant terms, conditions, and administrative requirements that pertain to successful applications. The [Grant Management](#) section of the NEH website outlines all the responsibilities of award recipients, including anti-lobbying restrictions, in great detail. Applicants may obtain the evaluations of their applications by sending an e-mail message to publicpgms@neh.gov.

In September 2015 NEH adopted without exception a new government-wide regulation for federal awards, referred to as the "Uniform Guidance." The Uniform Guidance applies to all NEH awards to organizations and is aimed at reducing the administrative burden on award recipients and improving accountability of federal financial assistance for tax payers. (See 2 C.F.R. Part 200: [UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS FOR FEDERAL AWARDS](#).) NEH will identify in each grantee's award documents the relevant terms, conditions, and administrative requirements from the Uniform Guidance with which the grantee must comply.

Help NEH eliminate fraud and improve management by providing information about allegations or suspicions of waste, fraud, abuse, mismanagement, research misconduct (fabrication, falsification, plagiarism), or unnecessary government expenditures, during the period of award performance, to the NEH Office of the Inspector General. You can find details on how to report such allegations and suspicions [here](#).

V. Additional Information

Contact information for the program and Grants.gov

If you have questions about the program, contact:

Division of Public Programs
National Endowment for the Humanities
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20506
202-606-8269
publicpgms@neh.gov

Grants.gov: <http://www.grants.gov>
Grants.gov help desk: support@grants.gov
Grants.gov customer support tutorials and manuals:
<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-tools-and-tips.html>
Grants.gov support line: 1-800-518-GRANTS (4726)

Privacy policy

Information in these guidelines is solicited under the authority of the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965, as amended, 20 U.S.C. 956. The principal purpose for which the information will be used is to process the grant application. The information may also be used for statistical research, analysis of trends, and Congressional oversight. Failure to provide the information may result in the delay or rejection of the application.

Application completion time

The Office of Management and Budget requires federal agencies to supply information on the time needed to complete forms and also to invite comments on the paperwork burden. NEH estimates that the average time to complete this application is fifteen hours per response. This estimate includes time for reviewing instructions, researching, gathering, and maintaining the information needed, and completing and reviewing the application.

Please send any comments regarding the estimated completion time or any other aspect of this application, including suggestions for reducing the completion time, to the Chief Guidelines Officer, at guidelines@neh.gov; the Office of Publications, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C. 20506; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (3136-0134), Washington, D.C. 20503. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- **Verify and if necessary update your institution’s record, or create an Entity record for your institution, at the System for Award Management (SAM).**
Complete at least four weeks before the deadline.
- **Verify your institution’s registration or register your institution with Grants.gov.** Complete at least two weeks before the deadline.
- **Download the application package from Grants.gov, or access it through Grants.gov Workspace.** The [program resource page](#) on NEH’s website has a direct link to the package. Alternatively, you can search Grants.gov for this program. (Note that Grants.gov tells you to download the “application instruction” as well as the “application package.” The “application instruction” is this document, so there’s no need to download it.) The program resource page also has a direct link to the instructions for completing the package.
- **Complete the following forms contained in the Grants.gov application package.**
 1. Application for Federal Domestic Assistance - Short Organizational
 2. Supplementary Cover Sheet for NEH Grant Programs
 3. Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form
 4. Attachments Form—Using this form, attach the parts of your application as described in the guidelines:
 - ATTACHMENT 1: Table of contents (name the file “contents.pdf”)
 - ATTACHMENT 2: Abstract (name the file “abstract.pdf”)
 - ATTACHMENT 3: Narrative (name the file “narrative.pdf”)
 - ATTACHMENT 4: Script or treatment (name the file “script.pdf”)
 - ATTACHMENT 5: Digital design, if applicable (name the file “digitaldesign.pdf”)
 - ATTACHMENT 6: Images, if applicable (name the file “images.pdf”)
 - ATTACHMENT 7: Bibliography (name the file “bibliography.pdf”)
 - ATTACHMENT 8: Résumés and letters of commitment, and if applicable letters of interest or commitment from broadcasters and distributors (name the file “resumesandletters.pdf”)

ATTACHMENT 9: Description of your sample (name the file “sample.pdf”) If you are providing a link to your sample, double-check the link to make sure that it works, and supply all necessary passwords. The link must work for the duration of the review (that is, through April 2018).

ATTACHMENT 10: Budget (name the file “budget.pdf”)

5. Budget Narrative Attachment Form (also known as the Budget Narrative File)—Using this form, attach **only** a copy of your institution’s current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement (or an explanation why you are not attaching such an agreement). (See the Grants.gov instructions for institutional applicants, which are available on the program resource page, for additional information.)

Do not attach your application budget to the Budget Narrative Attachment Form; instead you must attach it to the Attachments Form (see above in the Application Checklist), as attachment 10.

Your attachments must be in Portable Document Format (.pdf). We cannot accept attachments in their original word processing or spreadsheet formats. If you don’t already have software to convert your files into PDFs, many low-cost and free software packages will do so. You can learn more about converting documents into PDFs [here](#).

Upload your application to Grants.gov. NEH **strongly** suggests that you submit your application no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on the day of the deadline. Doing so will leave you time to contact the Grants.gov help desk for support, should you encounter a technical problem of some kind. The Grants.gov help desk is now available seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day (except on [federal holidays](#)), at 1-800-518-4726. You can also send an e-mail message to support@grants.gov.

Be sure to read the [document](#) (PDF) that explains how to confirm that you successfully submitted your application to Grants.gov. It is your responsibility as an applicant to confirm that Grants.gov and subsequently NEH have accepted your application.

TIMELINE

Before the August 9, 2017 deadline: Contact Division of Public Programs program officers (at 202-606-8269 or publicpgms@neh.gov) with questions and for advice (optional)

June 28, 2017: Submit draft application by this date (optional)

July 11, 2017: Create or verify your institution’s Entity record at the System for Award Management by this date

July 25, 2017: Register your institution (or verify its registration) with Grants.gov by this date

August 9, 2017: Submit application through Grants.gov by this date

October-November 2017: peer review panels take place

March 2018: meeting of the National Council on the Humanities, followed by funding decisions

April 2018: applicants are notified of the funding decisions

April 2018: institutional grants administrators and project directors of successful applications receive award documents by e-mail

April 2018: successful applicants may begin work on their projects